(a) whether Government are contemplating to change the existing structure of Planning Commission;

(b) if so, what is the proposal for such a change; and

(c) what are the reasons for taking a decision by Government for changing the existing structure of Planning Commission?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND PUBLIC GRIEVANCES OF THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The Planning Commission is currently engaged in an exercise to determine what would be the most effective role for the Commission in the altered domestic and global scenario. It will take time before this results in proposals for restructuring the Planning Commission.

Measures for Perspective Planning

1650. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether despite planning for last 50 years, India is a home of nearly half the world's hungry people as reported by the Food and Agriculture Organisation; and

(b) if so, the measures taken to ensure that general rural poors are in a position to purchase nutritious food with more income by perspective planning?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND PUBLIC GRIEVANCES OF THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS. (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) Government is not aware of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) having published a report stating that half of the hungry population of the world live in India. FAO's reports normally refer to undernourishment and not hunger. In a publication issued by FAO in 1999 entitled "Food Insecurity in the World" which gives the details of the prevalence of undernourishment in developing countries it has been

estimated that in India the percentage of the undernourished in the total population in 1995-97 was 22%. The number of undernourished people in India has been estimated in FAO's publication as 204.4 million, which constitutes about 25% of the total undernourished population in the world.

(b) In India, Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) provides food grains at reduced prices to the poor.

Eradication of poverty in hilly areas of the country

1651. SHRI PRAKANTA WARISA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated some programmes and schemes for eradication of poverty in hilly areas of the country particularly in the hilly areas of NER;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the action taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND PUBLIC GRIEVANCES OF THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) to (d) Planning and Development of an area and allocation of funds for the purpose are primarily the responsibility of the concerned State Government. In order to address the special problems of hill areas, Hill States are treated as Special Category States. Designated hill areas which form part of States are allocated Special Central Assistance under the Hill Areas Development Programme and Western Ghats Development Programme.

The Government is implementing specifically designed Centrally Sponsored anti-poverty programmes for generation of both self employment and wage-employment, namely, Swaranjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana, Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana and Employment Assurance Scheme, in rural areas including the hill areas and the North-Eastern Region. These programmes have been re-designed and re-structured in order to improve their efficacy/impact on the poor.